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At Mythical U

CIA

JAMES A. WECHSLER

The season of Commencement brings the ancient rite of honorary degrees. In some instances the recognition seems wholly merited, often depending on the viewer's preconceptions; in others the awards are entirely absurd, and even dictated by the hope of generous financial aid from the revered recipient.

In talking with a group of Columbia seniors the other night it occurred to me that an establishment of higher learning could alter these stuffy proceedings by the bestowal of what might be called honorary degrees-with-tongue-in-cheek. The suggestion was favorably received; there is hereby offered to any university with a whimsical soul my own list of proposals.

It will be noted that the choices are concentrated in the fields of politics, journalism and sports, with a couple of exceptions; men more expert than I could be called upon to make nominations in areas of culture and science. And so, to the trustees of Mythical University, these preliminary citations are commended.

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To RICHARD NIXON: For his steadfast refusal to accept the cynical proposition that a wise man knows when he is licked, and whose perseverance inspires thousands who gather intermittently at Shea Stadium and Baker Field to reaffirm their belief in miracles.

To Selective Service Director LEWIS B. HERSHEY: For his gallant effort to protect the armed services from the infiltration of intelligence.

To Secretary of State DEAN RUSK: For his tenacious defense of the illusion that Gen. Ky is the modern embodiment of the spirit of Winston Churchill.

To the editors of the DAILY NEWS editorial page: for holding fast to the faith that you can fool most of the people most of the time; and for staunchly declining to be dismayed by the prospect of nuclear war.

To RALPH HOUK: For stepping forward to relieve his cherished friend, Johnny Keane, as manager of the Yankees and thereby proving his high fidelity to the Columbia Broadcasting System.

To SEN. JAMES EASTLAND: For establishing by word and deed on so many days of so many years that the legend of white supremacy is a discredited myth.

To REP. ADAM CLAYTON POWELL: For demonstrating to guilt-ridden white citizens that cynicism and lust for power are not the private monopoly of those whose color happens to be white.

To the PULITZER PRIZE COMMITTEE: For upholding the view that almost no play is the thing in almost any year.

To BARRY GOLDWATER: For continuing to challenge the simplistic modern assumption that the world is indisputably round.

To the editors of TIME MAGAZINE: For retaining and reaffirming confidence in their own omniscience in the face of shattering blows.

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To WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.: For refusing to yield to the soft suggestion that there is any necessary connection between the role of scholar and gentleman.

To FBI Director J. EDGAR HOOVER: For vigilantly combating the efforts of unattached young females to engage in co-existence with youthful FBI bachelors.

To DR. TIMOTHY LEARY: For teaching many young Americans how to stop the world when they want to get off.

To the LEADERS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR ONE MILLION: For diligently contesting the spreading fantasy that Red China exists.

To the Pro-Peking "NEW LEFTISTS": For rejecting the old-fashioned notion that one generation may learn anything from the experience of its predecessors.

To the BASEBALL OWNERS of both major leagues: For their long, costly and tenacious endeavor to sustain the dream that baseball is a "sport," not a business.

To CIA Chief RABORN: For proving that an intelligence agency can confuse its own country at least as often as it baffles the enemy.

To PRESIDENT JOHNSON: For his warm, eloquent defense of the right of his countrymen to agree with him.

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No doubt too many names and institutions have been negligently omitted from this list. But, if all goes well at Mythical U's 1966 Commencement, there will be ample chance to expand the roster from year to year.